

RICHMOND'S HARBOR COMING INTO ITS OWN

With Intelligent Handling, Traffic on River Is Being Greatly Developed.

GREAT NEED FOR DREDGING
Government Gives Eighteen-Foot Channel to City, but Harbor Cannot Now Provide Fourteen-Foot Berths in Front of Wharves.

Wide-awake as Richmond unquestionably is, its greatest potentiality, water trade, has suffered for years for want of intelligent development and it is only recently that it has begun to come into its own.

Richmond, situated 125 miles from the ocean, has, perhaps, the greatest natural water advantages of any city of the world at such a distance inland. At its very doors is a navigable high-way, permitting vessels of sixteen-foot draft to reach its landings, and yet, with these chances for coastal and foreign trade, the city has heretofore neglected to seize its opportunities, and business has suffered as a consequence.

In the past few years, however, large sums of money have been spent by the city on improvements, and, while the harbor part went for the acquisition of property, a start in the right direction has been made, and the next few years may see a revival of the maritime glories of this port, which in antebellum days was one of the greatest marts in America for South American goods.

The James River is a manifold advantage to this city and State. It is a grand highway through the Tidewater district of Virginia, available for all sorts of small craft. It affords a means to build up foreign trade, even in a limited way, and is a wonderful avenue for the development of coastwise trade, and is incidentally a great equalizer of freight rates.

GOVERNMENT HAS SPENT LARGE SUMS ON JAMES RIVER
For several decades the United States government has spent large sums on the James River, and to-day it is ready to handle any vessel of ordinary size. Before, however, the big craft can begin coming here, the city must make vital improvements on its harbor, which in no way is suitable for the facilities offered by the river itself.

The government has succeeded in widening and deepening the channel, until to-day it offers a highway to the sea of eighteen and one-half feet in depth. When the harbor is brought to the same uniform depth, and not before, will Richmond on the James be practically Richmond on the sea. To bring the harbor to this depth is no idle dream, and, when it is done, the advantage of its hundred and odd miles inland will be offset by its proximity to the populous interior, and advantage will then be taken of its convenience as a distributing port inland.

Harbor improvements must be made immediately, if it is to become a port of consequence, as it is naturally destined to be. There are now nine private wharves in the port. Four of these are private wharves open to the public. Two are municipal property. The other three have fallen into decay from disuse.

NUCLEUS HERE FOR GREATLY INCREASED BUSINESS
With these dockage facilities, it appears that Richmond has a nucleus for a wonderful business. Its trade is big, but nothing to compare with what it will be when there is an intelligent outlay of money by the city.

The four private wharves are owned by the Richmond Chemical Company, the Richmond Cedar Works, the Richmond Steamship Company, and the Old Dominion Steamship Company. They are all located on the north side of the river, and answer well the purpose for which they are maintained, and do an enormous business for the owners, who use them entirely for the conduct of their own shipping. On the same side of the harbor is the old Clyde Line wharf, now fallen into decay, the City wharf and the City Dock. Opposite the City wharf is the Southern Railway Company wharf, and farther down, on the Henric side is the James River wharf, owned by the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway Company.

The City Wharf and City Dock are municipally owned. The wharf was formerly the old Bay Line property and was purchased and put in shape by the city a year or so ago. The City Dock was also purchased and is now open for use. These two properties have cost the city about \$200,000, and both are excellent investments for the future. With the acquisition of the Clyde Line property, which is now pending before the City Council, the city will have wharfage facilities to accommodate a huge trade, providing the harbor is improved proportionately.

MUST TAKE STEPS TO DEEPEN HARBOR.
The chief improvement necessary, beyond the control of the water front, is in the depth of the harbor in front of the wharves. The Southern Railway Company is preparing to ask the Admiralty Board to dredge in front of its property. This wharf now handles ten vessels to every one using the other wharves, and its business is growing rapidly, but here, as at the other wharves, the channel is not sufficiently deep to accommodate long craft, and a number of ship owners, after one experience here, have declined to return.

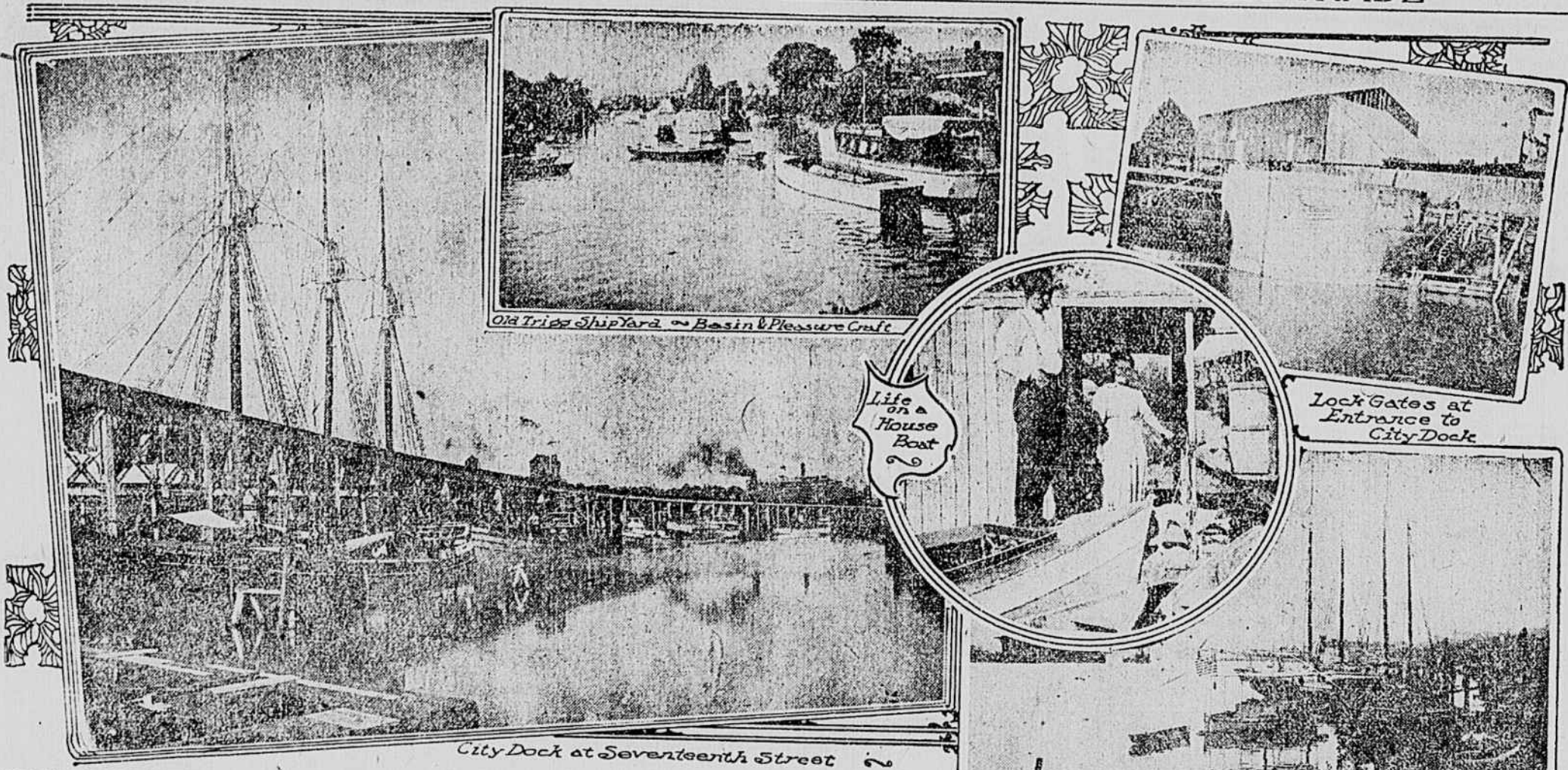
Their position is a natural one. With vessels drawing fourteen feet of water, it is a big risk to come into a port where there is a possibility of stranding high and dry with a heavy cargo.

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SCENES INDICATING GREAT REVIVAL IN RICHMOND'S WATER TRADE



City Dock at Seventeenth Street

on board. To do so would mean damage to the boats, which would offset the gain from the freight. Then, too, sufficient water, and then face the possibility of paying for the damage to the boat if it should go aground.

To dredge out the harbor to a uniform depth of sixteen to eighteen feet would cost money, but would be money well expended. A number of suggestions along this line have been made, and one of the most feasible plans is one attributed to Colonel C. P. E. Hargraves, a well known local engineer, long connected with the government work on the harbor between the two banks, on a line below the entrance to the City Dock, and to then keep a dredge stationed at the narrow point of the river to catch the sand and mud which washes down, and prevent it from entering the harbor. This sand, it is believed, could be put to commercial use, and BUSINESS OF PORT.

IS GAINING EVERY YEAR.
The business in the Richmond port is gaining each year, and the size of the majority of the barges were those devoted to river or bay use, but today the larger number are of the sea-going class. These cannot enter the City Dock, on account of the size of the wharf, the river barges can still go through. The wharves, then, must necessarily be used.

On account of its position, the City Wharf cannot handle heavy cargoes, as the haul makes the cost prohibitive. Big vessels on that account use the Chesterfield side of the river, where the cargoes can be loaded into box cars and sent to the very doors of consignees at a very small cost per car.

The Southern Railway Company wharf is built of stone, and is of permanent construction. It is fully equipped for handling freight, having derricks for stationery engines for loading and unloading. It has storage sheds, and eight cars can be run on the wharf at a time. No other wharf, except the James River Wharf, belonging to the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway, far down the river, has the advantage of such railroad facilities.

LARGE BUSINESS DONE.
During the year 1913, ninety-one vessels used the Southern Railway wharf, and some for both loading and unloading. These boats had a total registered tonnage of 23,983 tons, and had double that capacity. The value of the goods handled at the wharf during that period was \$1,750,790. The cargoes consisted of grain, barreled fish, canned goods, pulp wood, staves, fertilizer material, scrap iron, lumber, railroad ties, coal, oil and other articles of commerce. The total weight of the cargoes was 64,624 tons.

The wharf is used by the Standard

Oil Company for its big oil barges, each with a capacity of 555,000 gallons. Two of these boats come into port at least three times a month, with an average load of 300,000 gallons of oil. A tug brings them up the river, and lying at their side it pumps the oil through an eight-inch pipe a distance of more than one mile to the plant of the company in South Richmond.

The City Wharf is built of wood, and has no facilities for loading or unloading, and no railroad has yet considered putting in track. Its channel is deeper than that of the other docks, but its location is against it. Owing to the size of the locks, the City Dock is not used to the extent it was but to several years ago. Then, again, it has competition from the City Wharf, which is free, and from the other five wharves. Every vessel passing in or out of the lock gates has to pay lockage. The dock also, lacks railroad facilities, and is in bad condition. It is used principally at the coal to local dealers, which bring CITY MAY PURCHASE.

MORE WATER FRONT
There is now a project on foot to have the city purchase the old Clyde Line property, which adjoins the City Wharf. This old deserted wharf would have to be rebuilt, but the city would then have a water front of 1,300 feet, in addition to the City Dock. This property, in a few years, it is believed, will be very valuable, and it is considered a good policy for the city to control as much of the water front as possible. With the wharf in condition, railroad facilities are bound to come.

At one time Richmond had four big water lines, but now only has two, the Old Dominion Line and the Furman Line. The former operates both day and night boats hauling passengers and freight to Norfolk. The latter does a like business between this port and Petersburg.

In addition to these regular boats, Richmond has a large line operated by the Larimore Barge Company. This company owns the John S. Panake, of Richmond, a barge of 335 tons register. This vessel is the largest craft ever owned here, and has a capacity of more than 1,500 tons. The line also owns the barge Safety, of 515 tons register and a capacity of 1,100 tons. H. P. Larimore is master of the first and W. T. Bell of the second.

The city of Richmond itself owns one tug and a dredging outfit. The tug, the Thomas Cunningham, Sr., and the dredge is under the command of Captain Thomas Cunningham, and they are used in keeping the harbor clear. During the summer months the channel is dredged, and in winter the river is kept clear of ice.

At the Richmond Cedar Works is a big flotilla of barges and smaller craft. This company has more than a dozen boats plying between its plant and the

Dismal Swamp, where its lumber camps are located. The company owns its own tugs to bring these boats in.

BARGES DO BIG BUSINESS
Practically all of the boats coming to Richmond are barges, but occasionally a small schooner will come in. During the spring and fall these small craft arrive in large numbers with barreled fish and canned goods. The barges carry chiefly coal and oil. They are sent away with fertilizers, railroad ties, lumber and other products of the local market.

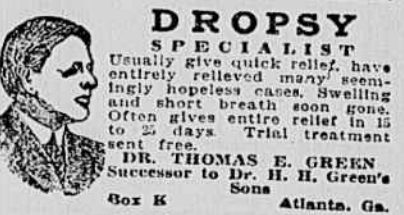
To lend color to the scene on the water front is the big flotilla of pleasure craft. There are hundreds of motor-boats owned here, and they are kept at several points. A Cascarets Shipyards basin is a favorite resort, while numbers are kept near the new Masso Bridge on the South Richmond side, while others are anchored opposite the port on the Chesterfield side. A large number of large private yachts come into the harbor during the year.

The port of Richmond is now principally concerned with the improvement of the harbor. It is of interest to know that the government is keeping up its work. During the past twenty years it has labored unceasingly to get a good channel, and now there is a uniform depth of from eighteen to twenty feet. To keep the channel deep, the government has constructed innumerable jetties, which narrow the stream, making its flow stronger, and by natural means force the debris to the sea.

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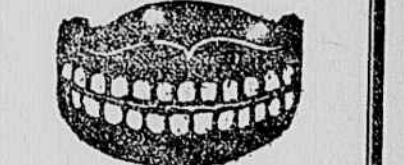
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